

OPENING STATEMENT

SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

7 NOVEMBER 2022

- Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today.
- I'd like to begin by acknowledging the unique opportunity SBS has to fulfil every Australian's common and shared desire to feel connected to one another, to be acknowledged and to belong.
- The Australia you see when you walk out your door each morning is what you see in everything we do at SBS. Contemporary Australia shines through our storytelling—and importantly through our storytellers. Stories told by contemporary Australia, for an evolving and vibrant Australia.
- SBS is an embodiment of Australia – a place that is home to the world's oldest continuing culture and to people from all corners of the globe.
- As Australia's demographics shift to reflect an ever greater diversity of cultures and languages, our responsibility and opportunity at SBS grows.
- I'm pleased to have this opportunity to touch on some of the initiatives recently launched by SBS which provide an insight into SBS's unique place in contemporary Australia.

Federal election

- In this election year, SBS played a vital role, providing more coverage, in more languages, than ever before.
- In addition to our comprehensive news and current affairs coverage, SBS was the only network to have every election debate on its platform through live translation of the debates into key languages other than English.
- SBS also conducted community-focused Election Exchanges across Australia, produced in-language explainer videos and created specialised information on how to participate in the election for newly arrived migrants.

Mind Your Health

- Following on from the success of SBS's multilingual Coronavirus portal, just last month SBS launched its *Mind Your Health* online content portal.



- The portal features content in multiple languages, aimed at sharing the rich diversity of cultural knowledge across communities and showing pathways to improving the mental and physical wellbeing of all Australians.

NITV 10 years

- Looking ahead to the rest of this year, we are very excited that NITV will mark 10 years since it first broadcast free-to-air as part of the SBS network.
- With NITV an integral part of the SBS network, First Nations Peoples and communities have a dedicated home in the national media landscape.

2023

- I am delighted to share that last week we announced that in 2023 we are proud to have more original Australian content than ever, including three new dramas, a record number of documentaries, and our highest level of First Nations content across the network – including the upcoming Australian kids show shot in the NT, Barrumbi Kids, on NITV. This is content that truly reflects the diversity of Australia.

Meta

- I would also like to make some brief points regarding the News Media Bargaining Code.
- In many ways, the Code has delivered on its promise.
- However, SBS continues to be concerned that the Code has not incentivised Meta to negotiate with us.
- This is contrary to the intention of the Code and SBS is also now at a competitive disadvantage compared to media companies that have deals with both Google and Meta.
- We understand Meta has been directing some news organisations to its grants program. However conditional access to very small amounts of non-ongoing funds is a poor substitute for negotiated deals.
- SBS remains open to further working with the Government, and indeed, further discussions with Meta, to address this current situation.
- Thank you and we welcome questions from the Committee.